Canada Post Pollinates Magnolia Stamps

The Magnolias stamps were issued on March 4 in se-tenant booklets of 10 and coils of 50 and a souvenir sheet with one of each stamp.

Magnolias have an aura of romance about them. While they conjure up visions of the U.S. South, complete with mint juleps and hoop-skirted belles, magnolias, originating in East and Southeast Asia, have adapted to climates in North America, Central America, the West Indies and South America.

The magnolia may be one of the oldest flowering plants on earth. Magnolia fossils believed to date back more than 20 million years have been found, and there is evidence that some plants of the Magnoliaceae family may have existed up to 95 million years ago. This delicate flower is so ancient, it evolved before bees existed, and botanists believe that the flowers were originally pollinated by beetles.

Named after French botanist Pierre Magnol, the Magnolia genus comprises more than 200 flowering plant species in the subfamily Magnolioideae, part of the Magnoliaceae family.

The varieties on the stamps—"Yellow Bird" (left) and "Eskimo" were chosen because they have been developed by hybridists to thrive in Canada's cold winters and short summers.

"Yellow Bird"—so called for its sunny yellow color, blooms in May, making it ideal for briefer Canadian summers. Closed, it's reminiscent of a tulip waiting to bloom.

"Eskimo" with its large cup flowers in white with a hint of lavender, is so hardy it can survive a mild frost.

For more information on these stamps and all new issues of Canada, go to **www.CanadaPost.ca/shop** or phone 800-565-4362.